Policy on school bags

†4007. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the public schools all over the country are forcing small children to carry heavy school bags;

(b) if so, what steps Government is taking to check the said atrocity being meted out to children;

(c) whether Government is contemplating on making a uniform policy in this regard; and

(d) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has already given following guidelines to schools affiliated to it with regard to reduction of school bag loads:

(i) Not to over prescribe textbooks for primary classes and to keep the number of textbooks limited so as not to exceed the number prescribed by National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

(ii) No school bag for children of Classes I & II and to allow students to leave their school bags in school itself.

(iii) No homework to the children of Classes I & II and to evolve a concept of alternative to homework for the students of Classes III to V.

(iv) To plan a judicious time table to avoid unnecessary loading of school bags.

(c) and (d) The problem of heavy school bag was brought out in the report 'Learning without Burden' in 1993. National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 has several recommendations on reduction of physical, psychological and transactional load on school children. Based on NCF, 2005, new syllabi and textbooks have been prepared by NCERT and have been adopted in schools affiliated to CBSE. Several States have also revised their syllabi and textbooks based on NCF, 2005.

Districts without Government Degree Colleges

†4008. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of districts in the country where Government Degree Colleges do not exist;

(b) whether there is any scheme of Government to open Government Degree Colleges in all the districts of the country;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.